

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of the claims in the above-captioned patent application:

Listing of Claims:

1-12. (Cancelled)

13. (Original) A method of connecting two conduits comprising the steps of:
positioning a first saddle of a first coupler having a first channel within a first conduit;
positioning a second saddle of a second coupler having a second channel within a second conduit;
clamping said first conduit to said first saddle of said first coupler;
clamping said second conduit to said second saddle of said second coupler; and
connecting said first coupler and said second coupler.

14. (Original) The method of claim 13, further comprising the step of making an incision in said first conduit and positioning said saddle of said first coupler within said first conduit.

15. (Original) The method of claim 13, further comprising the step of making an incision in said second conduit and positioning said saddle of said second coupler within said second conduit.

16. (Original) The method of claim 13, wherein the step of clamping said first conduit to said first saddle comprises the step of heating a first tissue clamp to a transition temperature, such that said first tissue clamp secures said first conduit between said first tissue clamp and said first saddle.

17. (Original) The method of claim 13, wherein the step of clamping said second conduit to said second saddle comprises the step of heating a second tissue clamp to a transition temperature, such that said second tissue clamp secures said second conduit between said second tissue clamp and said second saddle.

18. (Original) The method of claim 13, wherein the step of clamping said first conduit to said first saddle comprises the step of extending a pair of legs formed in said first tissue clamp, such that said first tissue clamp secures said first conduit between said first tissue clamp and said first saddle.

19. (Original) The method of claim 13, wherein the step of clamping said second conduit to said second saddle comprises the step of extending a pair of legs formed in said second tissue clamp, such that said second tissue clamp secures said second conduit between said second tissue clamp and said second saddle.

20. (Original) The method of claim 13, wherein the step of connecting said first coupler and said second coupler comprises the steps of:

positioning a first flange of said first coupler in alignment with a second flange of said second coupler; and

crimping a clamping ring around said first flange and said second flange to secure said first coupler and said second coupler together.

21. (Original) The method of claim 20, wherein the step of positioning a first flange of said first coupler in alignment with a second flange of said second coupler comprises the step of engaging a first mating surface of said first coupler and a second mating surface of said second coupler.

22. (Original) The method of claim 13, wherein the step of connecting said first coupler and said second coupler precedes the steps of positioning said first saddle and said second saddle in said first conduit and said second conduit, respectively.

23-33. (Cancelled)

34. (Withdrawn) A coupler holder and delivery device for holding and delivering a coupler into a blood vessel, said coupler comprising a saddle; a channel, wherein said channel comprises a first end connected to said saddle and a second end; a tissue clamp positioned around said channel; and a flange formed adjacent to said second end of said channel, said coupler holder and delivery device comprising:

an outer tube surrounding an inner shaft, such that said outer tube is slidable on said inner shaft and independently of said inner shaft;

a coupler conforming end, which is mounted on a first end of said inner shaft and is adapted to engage said second end of said channel of said coupler; and

a pair of opposing, tissue clamp receiving flanges mounted on opposite sides of a first end of said outer tube and adapted to engage said tissue clamp bend said tissue clamp away from said saddle, wherein said outer tube is slidable toward said first end of said inner shaft to engage said flanges to said tissue clamp, and wherein said outer tube is slidable away from said first end of said inner shaft to release said tissue clamp from said flanges.

35. (Original) A method for delivering a coupler into a blood vessel, said coupler comprising a saddle; a channel, wherein said channel comprises a first end connected to said saddle and a second end; a tissue clamp positioned around said channel; and a flange formed adjacent to said second end of said channel, said method comprising the steps of:

engaging said channel of said coupler;

engaging said tissue clamp and bending said tissue clamp away from said saddle;
making an incision into said blood vessel;

delivering said coupler into said blood vessel through said incision;

securing said saddle to said blood vessel; and

releasing said tissue clamp, so that said tissue clamp conforms to said saddle.